

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 4, 2007

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell
Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: H.B. 47 [Hospital Infections Disclosure Act]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed H.B. 47 which would create the Hospital Infections Disclosure Act requiring hospitals to report quarterly data on hospital-acquired infection rates. SCPD strongly endorses the proposed legislation subject to the following amendments. First, the definition of “hospital” includes health care facilities operated by the Department of Correction. Council recommends that the definition of “hospital” also incorporate other state operated chronic care facilities, including the Delaware Psychiatric Center; Stockley Center; Emily P. Bissell Hospital; Governor Bacon Health Center and the Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill. Public reporting of infection rates will result in the enhanced quality of care for residents of such facilities. Second, in line 62, the reference to “Section 3 of this Act” should be to “Section 1003A of this Chapter”. SCPD also has the following observations.

First, there is a national campaign to make hospital infection rate information available to the public. Such disclosure facilitates informed choice and provides an incentive for hospitals to take steps to reduce the incidence of infections.

Second, in 2004, Consumers Union, the publisher of Consumer’s Report, published the attached article noting that hospital-acquired infections affect 5% of hospital patients and add almost \$5 billion a year in health care costs. Reports, data, and a model statute are collected on its website (www.consumersunion.org/campaigns).

Third, since 2002, fourteen (14) states have adopted laws requiring public reporting of infection

rates. Two (2) other states passed laws requiring public reporting of infection information, but not rates. Delaware's neighbors (Maryland and Pennsylvania) are among the states requiring public reporting of infection rates. See attached "Summary of State Activity".

Fourth, Delaware's Division of Public Health already requires reporting of infectious diseases by health care facilities. See 9 DE Reg. 1188 (February 1, 2006). However, there are no public reports which permit comparisons among hospitals.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position or recommendations on the proposed legislation.

cc: The Honorable Ruth Ann Minner
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

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